**Minutes of the 7th Round Innovation Plat Form Meeting For Nile Basin**

**Development Challenge (NBDC) Strategic Project (N2), Diga Woreda**

**Venue Diga Woreda, Administration Office (East Wollega Zone)**

**Date May 2, 2013**

**Time 9.00 am – 1.30 pm**

Agenda

1. Welcome address by Woreda Administrator
2. Participants Introduction
3. Matters arising from the last Minute
4. Evaluation of 2012 Diga Pilot Activities
5. Diga IP 2013 work plan
   1. Targeting beneficiaries of 2013 plans
   2. Preparation made for 2013 planned activities
   3. Purchase and Delivery of inputs for 2013 plans and further
6. Any other Business:

6.1 Matters arising from the last meeting minute

6.2. Issues to be considered in the future direction of Diga IP

**Participants**

On the meeting 33 participants from all members organizations participated. Participants list is annexed

**Opening Remarks**

**DIP. 6.1**. The meeting was started with a prayer offered by the elders.

Prior to the start of the meeting the platform chairman Ato Debela Kenea and Ato Gutema Berki of Diga woreda Livestock Development Head and IP technical group member requested the participants to introduce themselves and present verification for their delegation to participate in the forum as IP member. The IP members and other invited participants introduced themselves

**DIP 6.2**. The agenda for the day was presented and after some important points were added it was accepted and approved.

**DIP 6.3**. Before going in to discussion on each approved agenda items, brief opening speech was made by the Woreda vice administrator. He underlined major role fodder development plays in providing food for animals, water and soil conservation and general environment rehabilitation. He also underlined the importance of identifying the most suitable fodder species for the targeted three PAs in Didessa valley and effective participation of the farmers in the all aspects of 2013 work plan for implementation.

**DIP 6.4. Agenda 1: Evaluation of 2012 pilot test**

This agenda was presented by Mr. Gutema Gutema Berki. And he furthere briefed it. He stressed that, the result of 2012 planned activities in the 2 PAs of Didessa valley (Dembi and Dapo) was evaluated by the technical group in the 1st quarter of 2012. The main points extracted from the evaluation report at national IP meeting were presented by Ato Gutema Berki. He clearly presented the results by disaggregating successes, issues and challenges by each target site. Among the problems listed: delay in implantation of work plan 2012, late planting of the forages, shortage of time for land preparation, shortage of land, problem of soil erosion, shortage of forage seed and seedlings, delay in budget release were found to affect the last year performances. Discussion was made on the presentation. The issues have been intensively discussed.

Participants of the forum underlined that the challenges faced in 2012 work plan and further implementation is mainly related with the late adoption of the project proposal by the Diga district IP. Nevertheless, being support by the technical group and field level agents the farmers were able to plant and harvest good yield from this initial trials on their farm land, The beginning of the project in 2012 initiated both the support providers and the participated framers to lay a good foundation for the fodder development practice and opened way for the targeted farmers to benefit from it.

**DIP 6. 2. Agenda 2: plan of 2013**

This agenda was presented by Ato Debela Kenea the chairman of the IP forum meeting. He underlined that regardless of late start, the overall achievement of 2012 plan Diga IP was successful. He pointed out that the 2013 work plan is built on the experience and lesson learned during the first year pilot project implementation. Learning from the experience of their neighbors and observing the positive impact of forage development on water and soil management in their farm plots many farmers applied to the IP for enrollment in the 2nd year work plan. He pointed that that the issue of enrolling more farmers in the project repeatedly raised by the farmers in the past two successive meeting with target framers at the site level. Eventually the IP technical group and the last IP meeting decided that in 2013 work plan the number of project sites be increased from two to three.

Accordingly Dembi & Dapo sites will continue with their 40 HHs whereas the newly included site, **Humbo** will participate with 20 HHs. Out of these total participants 30% of the targeted farmers be female headed households. The area of land allocated for the project will be increased from 10 ha (last year) to 15 ha, i.e., each of the 60 farmers will allocate 0.25 ha from their farm land for this purpose. It was also stated that the problems encountered last year will not be repeated for the next time. Moreover appropriate needs of the targeted farmers will be assessed and successive training workshops will be organized on quarterly basis as per the schedule indicated in the action plan of 2013.

**DIP 6.5 Matters arising from last Minute**

Participants raised some of important points decided in the past meetings.

1. **Inputs availability for 2013 plan.**

Based on the last yea’sr experience seeds and seedlings of some of the grass species (Chomo, Desmodium, Tree Lucerne, Rhodes grass) were not adequately available in the nearby villages in Didessa valley area. They have to come from other district within the valley or from areas with similar agro climatic conditions outside the district. In response to this concern the IP /TG and the district livestock development and Agricultural development offices confirmed that already adequate preparation were made and all planned inputs will be made available at the sites before the end of May 2013.

1. **Chemical control of termite infestation**

Request for supply of chemicals to control further termite infestation was repeatedly raised by IP member farmers and

After a lengthy discussion, the forum members reached consensus and recommended, that reducing termite infestation, soil degradation, and restoring soil nutrients by reducing over grazing, etc. area are parts of the objective of the ongoing project.

Nevertheless Diga IP/TG has no allocated budget for purchase and delivery chemicals in its budget for 2013. However, to minimize the problem in areas outside the project trials plots the woreda Agricultural development and Local DAs must continue encouraging and initiating mass campaign in all the infested farmers associations to undertake tradition ways of termite control (digging out the queen, flooding the mounds, mound digging and smoking, destruction of the mass termite control Termite control essential

1. **Motivation for experience sharing**

Strengthening of experience sharing among the target and other stakeholders appreciated. In this regard the concern raised by the farmers and IP members is valid very much. The forum decided to strengthen its encouragement to the IP /TG and the district line offices to continue facilitating and supporting farmers to effectively participate in experience sharing among farmers and other stakeholders.

1. Feedback of the April 2013 training offered by ILRI for the Diga IP TG members was reported. The forum members expressed their thanks and appreciation to LLRI/IWMI for this training opportunity which is very important for the team capacity building in further planning and implementation of the project.\
2. **For further training** needs of the farmers and local stakeholders the forum recommended that need assessment to be carried out and appropriate training arrangement be carried out by the TG, district line offices, and ILRL/IWMI.
3. **Access to Loan and credit**- One the most repeated question of the farmers request to IP to organize loan/credit scheme for purchase of dairy cows.- The forum member pointed out that the Diga /IP has no capacity to provide or access loan in its present status. It is therefore, essential for the forum to further look forward to strengthening the idea and look for potential donors and funding agencies to address this important need of the framers.

***General Conclusion and directions***

After thorough discussion held on last year performance and 2013 plan, the following points were shared among all the participants:

* All the participating farmers (both existing and new) should prepare their farm land as early as possible;
* The farmers should identify communal grazing areas for the planned development intervention;
* Vetivar grass will be developed on the soil conservation structures
* Field days will be organized to share best experiences
* Experiences of the last year will be used as inputs for the future intervention;
* All the district level stakeholders should render their support to realize the project success
* There will be intensive support and follow up from the woreda administration.

Finally the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM